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ABSTRACT

Few interdisciplinary early intervention teams are aware that they have created a team culture--a set of norms of behavior, values, and beliefs. This manual assists team members in discovering their team culture so they understand how it affects their performance and the quality of services they provide, and so they can decide if they would like to modify team process and performance. The manual examines what team culture is, how team culture affects assessment and intervention, frameworks for exploring team culture, observational and interviewing procedures to use along with self-evaluation procedures to discover a team's culture, characteristics of effective teams, and strategies for modifying team culture. The manual is a training module of Project TIE (Teams in Early Intervention), which was conceptualized to meet the need for: (1) involvement of formerly "ancillary" service professionals in providing early intervention to children with disabilities, (2) high quality family-centered services, and (3) training in the team approach. The project provides training to four groups that might constitute an early intervention team--speech/language pathologists, motor therapists, health care professionals, and family members. Appendices list instruments for team assessment, explore characteristics of gender communications, discuss issues of prejudice and discrimination, offer a guide to ethnographic interviewing, and describe nominal group techniques. (Contains 42 references.) (JDD)

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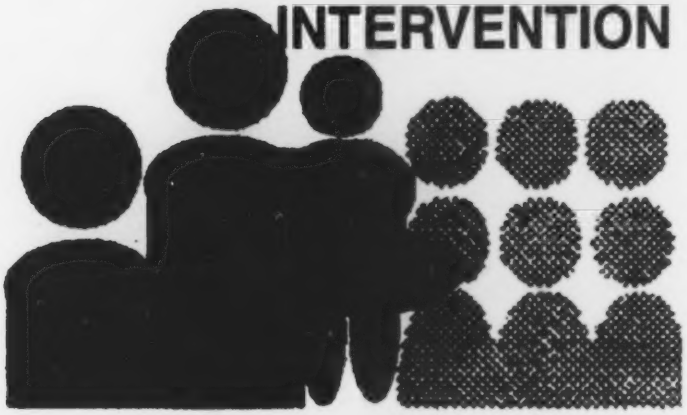
TEAMS IN EARLY INTERVENTION



Discovering Team Culture

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Discovering Team Culture

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Discovering Team Culture

Discovering Team Culture

By Carol Westby, Ph.D., & Valerie Ford, Ph.D.

Organizational culture is not just another piece of the puzzle, it is the puzzle. From our point of view, a culture is not something an organization has; a culture is something an organization is. (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, p. 126)

INTRODUCTION

Intervention programs for children are undergoing major paradigm shifts in philosophy. In the past, many professionals worked in isolation. Teachers ran their own classrooms; occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech language pathologists removed children from a classroom to work with them. Speech/language pathologists, motor therapists, and diagnosticians/ psychologists conducted their evaluations separately. First a psychologist or diagnostician took the child into a small room and administered standardized tests. Next, the speech-language pathologist took the child and administered tests. Then the physical or occupational therapist worked with the child. Each professional wrote a report. Little effort was made to integrate information across developmental domains. The professionals might, at most, come together to discuss their findings with the family and, perhaps, to write an evaluation summary.

Now programs are moving from program-centered and child-centered orientations to family-centered orientations, and from an individual/independent orientation to a team orientation. Changes in the philosophy of service provision, as well as changes in laws, are increasingly requiring professionals to work on teams. Public Law 99-457 requires that professionals work together as a team and that parents be part of that team. Assessments may be conducted in an arena format, with one person taking the responsibility for interacting with the child. The team writes a single report that includes data from parents. As team members, parents also participate with the rest of the team in generating recommendations.

Professionals have spent considerable time learning their areas of expertise. Until recently, they have spent little time learning how to work as team members. Few teams are aware that they have created a team culture — a set of norms of behavior, values, and beliefs. The culture that teams develop greatly affects the ways in which they perform and the quality of services they provide. This manual will assist you in discovering your team culture so you can decide if and how you would like to modify your team's process and performance. In this module you will learn:

- what team culture is and how team culture affects team functioning
- how to use observational and interviewing procedures along with self-evaluation procedures to discover the culture of your team
- strategies for modifying team culture

DEFINING TEAM CULTURE

Anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, educators, and lay persons have different definitions of culture — and everyone's definition has elements of truth. Edward B. Tylor, one of the first anthropologists, in 1871 defined culture as "That complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (as cited in Sackmann, 1991). The study of culture generally includes three components: what people do (cultural behavior), what people know (cultural knowledge), and the things people make and use (cultural artifacts) (Spradley, 1980). Some aspects of these cultural components are explicitly or consciously known by individuals living within a given culture, while other components are not. The explicit or conscious knowledge about one's culture is what many persons associate with the word culture. It includes the visible artifacts of a group such as its music, stories, and ceremonies.

Individuals in a given culture also have a wealth of implicit knowledge about their culture. This implicit knowledge, which includes behaviors, beliefs, perspectives, and assumptions, is so deeply embedded in the corporate mind of the culture that it is outside most individuals' awareness. Understanding a group's culture requires more than recognizing the visible artifacts. Artifacts are superficial, and often symbolic, manifestations of culture that give clues about what a particular group of people value and assume to be true. Therefore, one must know how to interpret and give meaning to these artifacts in order to understand a culture's values, beliefs, and assumptions.

Although a great deal of attention has been given to the cultures of families and some attention has been given to the culture of mainstream classrooms, little attention has been given to the culture of groups and organizations serving clients, patients, and students. Only in the last decade has organization or team culture been investigated (Frost, Moore, Louis, Lundberg, & Martin, 1985; 1991; Ott, 1989; Schein, 1985). Organizations, agencies, and teams working together within organizations develop their own unique cultures that function for the group and individuals within the group in the same way as other cultural manifestations do. In fact, "Culture is to the organization what personality is to the individual — a hidden, yet unifying theme that provides meaning, direction and mobilization" (Ott, p. 1). The organization or team culture provides team members with a way to frame their roles and experiences. It provides a perspective for team members to use in interpreting what is occurring and what will occur. It is like a lens through which they can view their activities and give them meaning. The team culture provides the driving force behind all team activities.

Discovering Team Culture

Effects of Team Culture on Assessment and Intervention

While early intervention teams and teams who conduct evaluations and assessments of children are aware that the child's culture plays an important role in how the child and his/her family respond, most teams are not aware of how their own team culture affects their assumptions and beliefs about assessment and intervention. The team assessment/intervention culture determines who is on the team, the focus and interests of the team, how they interact with children and their families, how they share information, the types of assessment information they collect, how they interpret information, the diagnoses that are made, and the recommendations that are given. The results of the assessment are as much or more dependent on the culture of the team as they are on the cultures, strengths, and needs of the children who are evaluated and their families.

In racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups, the culture determines who is a member and provides the guidelines for how members are to behave or not to behave. It tells a person how to be. Team culture serves similar functions (Ott, 1989):

1. A team's culture provides shared patterns of interpretations or perceptions so team members know how they are expected to act and think. For example, it may require that team members be alert to cultural variations in child rearing practices and values when making diagnoses and giving suggestions for intervention; it may guide members in how they introduce themselves to students and their families (first name, first and last name, title and last name); it may determine if members are to encourage or discourage family members from participating in the evaluation; it determines the role of the team leader and how contributions from team members are presented and accepted; and it determines if the group functions as an interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, or transdisciplinary team.

2. A team's culture provides shared patterns of feelings and values, so team members know what they are expected to value and how they are expected to feel. Does the team value a child-centered or family-centered orientation? Does the team focus on the student's strengths or possible deficit areas in the evaluation? Does the team view itself as a team of experts who can assess and develop intervention plans for even the most complex children? Does the team view itself as exceptionally competent with certain types of conditions but lacking knowledge in other areas?

3. A team's culture defines who are members and nonmembers of the team. Who are viewed as the "official team players?" Who are invited participants? If parents or classroom teachers attend assessment staffing meetings, may they participate equally with other team members? What roles do team players and invited participants have?

4. The team culture functions as a team control system, prescribing and prohibiting certain behavior. It can affect the diagnoses that the team makes and the diagnoses they avoid. For example, is it acceptable to use the terms mental retardation, cerebral palsy, and autism; or must terms such as developmental disability, physically challenged, and pervasive developmental disorder be used? Do one or two team members interpret the information for all, or must all team members be present to interpret the information?

Think about your team. How are members of your team expected to act and think? What are they expected to value and how are they expected to feel? Who are the team members? What behaviors are prescribed? What behaviors are prohibited?

Frameworks for Exploring Team Culture

Types of Knowledge Framework

One team culture framework considers the types of knowledge that are available to team members about themselves or an outside observer. There are two basic types of knowledge: explicit knowledge (what is consciously known by the team about itself and its members) and implicit knowledge (unconscious assumptions). Although it is not likely that team members would know how to respond if asked to describe their team culture, they do have explicit knowledge about some aspects of their culture. Members of a team or organization can generally discuss four types of explicit knowledge when asked to describe their team (Sackmann, 1991):

1. **Dictionary knowledge**
2. **Directory knowledge**
3. **Recipe knowledge**
4. **Axiomatic knowledge**

Figure 1 summarizes explicit team culture knowledge.

Figure 1
EXPLICIT CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge	*Definition*	*Example*
Dictionary Knowledge	what is or what exists	persons on team; roles and responsibilities; work space
Directory Knowledge	how things are done	ways evaluations conducted
Recipe Knowledge	ideas about what or how something should be done	should do interviews; should use naturalistic assessment
Axiomatic Knowledge	why things are done the way they are	don't do interviews because can't be reimbursed

For example, an assessment/intervention team may describe the ***dictionary knowledge*** or "what is" in terms of their goal (e.g., qualifying students for special education), the persons on the team and their roles and responsibilities, the space available for carrying out their work, et cetera. ***Directory knowledge*** may include the ways in which evaluations and interpretive sessions are conducted (who does what, when, with whom). ***Recipe knowledge*** is composed of ideas about what or how something should be done, or what should be done when things do not work. For example, the team may report they use only formal tests in their evaluations, but that a good evaluation should include a family interview or an observation of the student in a natural setting. ***Axiomatic knowledge*** explains the why of the behavior. The team may justify their use of specific tests because they are on a state approved list, or they may explain that they do not do family interviews and observations in naturalistic settings because they are too time consuming or because the team cannot be financially reimbursed for them. The explicit team knowledge is transferred to new team members through written procedures and verbal directions.

Think about your team. What dictionary, directory, recipe, and axiomatic knowledge do you have?

The explicit cultural knowledge that a team is able to describe does not provide a complete picture of their culture. New team members often discover unstated aspects of the team culture when they unknowingly violate some expected behavior. For example, the team agenda states that staffings begin at 9:00, but in actuality they do not begin until 9:15. Old team members know this; new team members arrive at 9:00. Or the team prides itself on being a high-perfor-

mance team. To a new member, this may mean seeing many children a week and completing reports in a timely manner. To old team members this means focusing on learning new assessment procedures and presenting at state and national conferences. These are examples of what a team may not know about itself.

Have you ever found that you have violated unstated team culture? Ask all team members to discuss instances when they found themselves not understanding what other team members expected, yet they had not been informed of the expectations?

These examples illustrate that exploring team cultures requires learning about both visibly and/or audibly explicit aspects of culture and invisible and/or unspoken, implicit aspects of culture. Team culture can be viewed as consisting of three levels (Ott, 1989):

Level 1a. Artifacts ..... Explicit Visible Knowledge
Level 1b. Patterns of behavior ..... Explicit Visible Knowledge
Level 2: Values and Beliefs ..... Explicit Nonvisible Knowledge
Level 3: Assumptions ..... Implicit Knowledge

1a. Artifacts. There are several ways for a team to explore explicit and implicit knowledge about itself. Team members can become aware of their artifacts. Artifacts are objects that intentionally or unintentionally communicate information about the team's technology, beliefs, values, assumptions, and ways of doing things. They can generally be readily identified simply by looking and listening. Information about artifacts can be gathered by wandering through the physical setting, reviewing archival records, such as minutes of team meetings, and analyzing team products, such as reports and brochures. Artifacts for an assessment/intervention team could include:

- statements of team mission or philosophy
- tests and assessment instruments used
- computers and computer programs used
- stationery
- reports
- release of information forms
- room arrangement
- equipment
- supplies

What is not seen is as important as what is seen.

Have team members examine the above list for their agency. Also note what isn't seen. Then share the information. What books and tests are not on the shelves? What equipment is not in the assessment rooms?

1b. The patterns of behavior. Members can observe their habits, patterns of behavior, norms, rites, and rituals. For assessment/intervention teams this can include:

- the sequence in which aspects of the assessment are conducted
- the form of reports
- the presentation format in staffings
- the words chosen or avoided for diagnoses
- who does the interpretive session
- the way staff are hired
- ways information is shared within and outside the team.
- social activities of the team, such as birthday celebrations, lunch meetings, or participating together on a sports team.

Devote a team meeting to exploring the team's behavior patterns using the above list as a guideline for content.

2. Values and beliefs. Team members can explore the beliefs and values they use to explain, rationalize, and justify what they do and say (Sathe, 1985). It is important to realize that conversations about values and beliefs reflect espoused values — what people say they value, rather than the values actually in use. One can discover the values and beliefs through interviews or the administration of diagnostic instruments. Diagnostic instruments such as Brass Tacks (McWilliam & Winton, 1991), The Family Report (McWilliam, 1991) or the Family-Centered Program Rating Scale (Summers, Turnbull, Murphy, Lee, & Turbiville, 1991) can be used to assess the degree to which a team adheres to a family-centered philosophy. (See Appendix A for a listing of instruments and where they can be obtained).

Have the team brainstorm its beliefs and values as well as fill out one or two instruments that measure the degree to which the team is committed to a family-centered philosophy.

3. Assumptions. What a team does not know about itself are its assumptions. Assumptions are implicit; they are taken for granted and unconscious. Persons who have been on the team the longest are the least likely to be aware of these assumptions. These assumptions are most likely to be recognized by outsiders or new team members. They are beliefs, values, ethical and moral codes that

are ingrained. In addition to beliefs, basic assumptions include interpretations of ideas and affects or feelings. You cannot ask persons for their basic assumptions. You can only infer these assumptions from observations of the team and from the stories they tell about their experiences. Assumptions may not be rational; they may not even be acceptable to team members if they are spoken aloud. In fact, it is possible for the underlying assumptions of a team to be in direct conflict with their stated beliefs and values. Basic assumptions for an assessment/intervention team may involve:

- attitudes toward parents/clients as competent or incompetent
- the belief that clients/families should not be given any negative information
- the belief that conflict or differences of opinion among team members are always destructive and should be avoided at all costs.

To truly understand a team's culture requires exploration of its assumptions, or implicit knowledge, as well as its explicit knowledge about itself. To discover a team's basic assumptions, it is usually necessary to use someone who is not a member of the team and who is trained in team observation and interviewing.

Consider hiring an outside observer to observe your team and interview team members to discover the team's basic assumptions.

Developmental Stage Framework

Another framework for assessing a team's culture and how a team is performing is the developmental stage framework. Teams move through four stages from their inception to their becoming highly productive (Blanchard, Carew, & Parisi-Carew, (1990). **Figure 2** shows the characteristics of the stages of team development.

Figure 2

Characteristics of the States of Team Development

Stage	Productivity	Morale	Attitudes & Behaviors	Tasks for Team Development	Issues
Orientation	Low	Moderately High	Members eager and optimistic; accepting of team members; depend on authority; feel uncertainty; need to establish oneself	Define goals, direction, and roles of team members	Becoming included in team; developing trust among members
Dissatisfaction	Low-Moderate	Low	Dissatisfaction with other team members; frustration over goals and task; competition for power; feelings of incompetence; need for information	Develop skills of team members; learn how to work together	Dealing with control and power issues among team members; coping with conflict
Resolution	Moderately High	Variable and Improving	Development of trust, support, and respect; more open communication and feedback; sharing of responsibilities and control; improving self-esteem and confidence in skills	Share opinions and ideas; evaluate critically and constructively; examine team functioning; increase productivity	Moving from focus on content to focus on interactions; leader relinquishes control; avoiding "group think"
Production: A High Performance Team	High	High	Excitement about team activities; able to work both independently and collaboratively; confidence in skills; shared leadership; able to critically evaluate team functioning and productivity	Focus on goals; deal immediately and with interpersonal and group issues; use time efficiently	Major issues resolved

Each stage differs in terms of:

- the productivity of team members
- the morale of team members
- the attitudes and behaviors of team members
- tasks for team development
- issues
- managerial style required

In the first stage, ***orientation***, teams are eager and optimistic. Members are likely to be quite accepting of each other. Teams, however, do not usually stay in this stage, and in fact, to do so would inhibit their development and ability to reach their goals. In the second stage of team development, ***dissatisfaction***, team members are likely to become dissatisfied with other team members and their actions, or they become aware that they or others need more information to

function adequately. Team members are more likely to challenge one another; or if they feel they can't question, they may withdraw emotionally from the process. If team members can recognize what is happening in this stage and if the leader maintains her/his enthusiasm, listens to the issues, provides support and training, encourages the expression of conflict, and assists in managing it, the team can move on to the third stage, ***resolution***. At this stage, team members have further developed both their own professional skills and their team process skills and are able to communicate more openly. As the team develops their technical and process skills, they eventually become a ***high-performance*** team and are able to critically look at themselves to determine how to better develop. Not all members of a team are at the same stage. Members who have been with the team for some time may perceive the team to be at a highly productive level, whereas new team members may be at the orientation stage.

Think about your team. Write down some of the feelings, attitudes, and behaviors of your group that characterize each of these stages. If you decide that your group did not go through a phase, give some qualities of the group that may have contributed to the absence of that stage in the group's development.

	Stage	Evolution of Your Group
1.	Orientation stage	
2.	Dissatisfaction stage	
3.	Resolution stage	
4.	Production stage	

ASSESSING A TEAM'S CULTURE

Because knowledge about a team's culture is critical in understanding how a team functions, a major concern is how to identify and describe that culture. The traditional quantitative experimental designs have been ineffective in studying team organization (Van Maanen, 1982). Such approaches have yielded simplistic, reductionistic explanations of team functioning (Goodall, 1984). Qualitative methodologies offer another alternative for understanding the multiple and complex factors that determine what is happening in a team from the point of view of the team members. Qualitative methodologies rely on "grounded theory" which involves examination of objects and records, interviews, and detailed descriptions of observed events. One of the goals of qualitative researchers is to discover the language people use to represent their experiences to themselves and how people's interactions with each other influence their understanding.

To obtain a reliable and valid interpretation of a team culture, qualitative researchers use data triangulation. This mean that they look at the team culture from multiple perspectives and in multiple ways. There are four ways to triangulate (Denzin, 1978):

1. **Data triangulation:** use a variety of data sources (e.g., interviews of different persons—team members, parents, staff of other agencies);

2. **Investigator triangulation:** use several persons to conduct the observations and interviews;

3. **Theory triangulation:** use multiple perspectives to interpret the data (e.g., explicit types of knowledge of team culture; stages of team development; individual learning styles, etc.);

4. **Methodological triangulation:** use multiple methods to study a program or team (e.g., observations, interviews, self-evaluation questionnaires).

If you are to understand a culture, you must not only observe the environment (to discover the team structure), but you must also interview the team members and observe them in action (to discover the team processes). This requires the use of qualitative methods. The use of qualitative methods requires good observational and interviewing skills.

Discovering Team Culture

In this section of the module we will explore how to:

- observe the environment by reviewing artifacts and mapping the environment
- observe a team's process
- interview team members and others who interact with the team
- use self-evaluation questionnaires with team members

Observing the Environment

In order to develop good observational skills, the observer should be aware of a number of factors in the situation or oneself that can influence one's perceptions. **Figure 3** summarizes these factors (Anderson & Abeyta, 1988).

Figure 3

Factors in the Situation or Object Being Observed

1. Contrast factor: We perceive things that contrast with each other.
2. Repetition factor: Things that are repeated are perceived more readily.
3. Intensity factor: We perceive extremes in behaviors (high and low intensity).
4. Context factor: The context affects how we perceive an object or person.
5. Available information factor: The amount of information provided affects our perception.

Factors in the Observer/Perceiver

1. Physiological limits: We have limitations to the capacities of our senses.
2. Personal needs and interests: We perceive more readily when we have an interest or need to do so.
3. Personality factors: Open-minded and close-minded personalities perceive the world in very different ways.
4. Cultural influences: Our cultural and ethnic background affects our perceptions.
5. Past training and skills: Our skills and training affect how we perceive events.
6. Past experiences: Our personal upbringing affects how we perceive events.
7. Expectations (Psychological set): Our expectations influence how we perceive events and persons.

Source: Anderson, A.R., & Abeyta, A.J. (1988). Face-to-face interactions: Experiencing the dyadic communication process. P. 25. Copyright © 1988, Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt. Reprinted by permission of Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

Discovering Team Culture

Check the accuracy of your perceptions. This can be done by:

1. Asking others to verify your perceptions,
2. Comparing new experiences with past ones, and
3. Testing your perceptions through observation and experimentation.

Generally, you can trust a perception that has been repeatedly accurate.

Observation of the environment includes documenting the artifacts that are produced and materials/supplies that are used and noting the ways space is used and furnished.

Reviewing Artifacts and Materials

Artifacts are the products of the team. They may include:

- mission statements
- brochures
- parent information materials
- minutes of meetings
- reports (including IFSPs or IEPs)
- training modules
- materials, equipment, and supplies which may include:
  - computers, typewriters, dictaphones
  - books
  - tests, toys
  - playground equipment
  - standing boards, specialized chairs

Review all the team artifacts. What words, phrases, or ideas tend to recur in written materials? What do they reflect about the values and beliefs of the team or organization? What themes are emphasized? Is there a consistency of themes across artifacts, or are there contradictions? What equipment, books, tests, toys are available? What does the selection of equipment and materials say about team values and beliefs?

Mapping the Environment

The environment of the team also provides information about its culture. In order to understand the environment in which the team works, begin by walking through all the spaces used by the team. Then draw a map of the space. Then ask yourself these questions:

- Is the environment attractive?

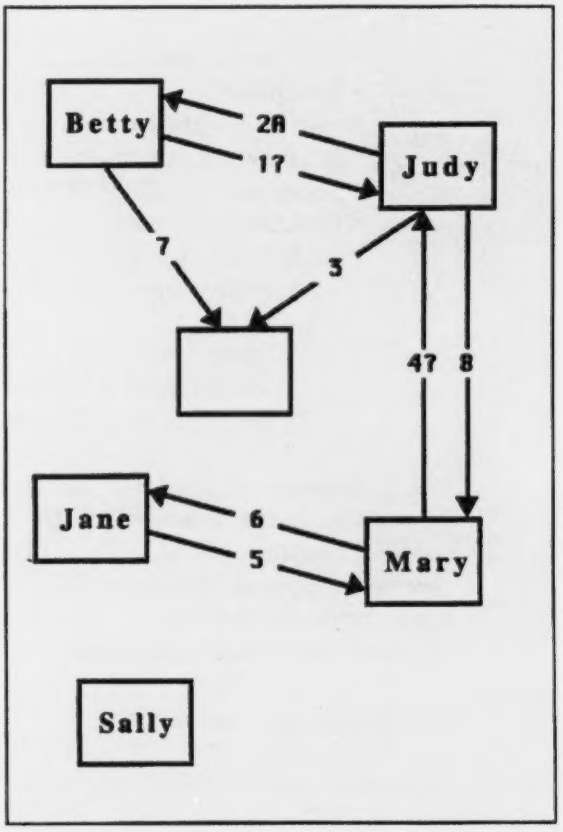
- How much space is provided for the team? How is it used?
- What furniture is present? What is its condition?
- Are all the offices equipped in a similar manner?
- Do team members have adequate space to work?
- Are all the offices the same size? If not, who gets the larger spaces?
- What space is available for assessments and treatment?
- What does the environment tell you about the team's values and beliefs?

Observation of Team Process

A number of aspects related to a team's process can be observed. You can look at who talks to whom, when, where, and the content of what is said. This section will address ways to look at a team's communication patterns and how team members relate to one another in team meetings.

Figure 4

Sociogram



Team Interactions

One of the best ways to understand how a team interacts is by observing a team meeting. Sit off to the side, positioning yourself so you can see and hear everyone. Drawing a sociogram is a helpful way to show who talks to whom. This is done by drawing a map showing the seating of the team members. **Figure 4** is an example of a sociogram.

As each person talks, draw a line from the person speaking to the person he or she is addressing. If a person is addressing the whole team, draw the line to the center. If you wish, you can number each line to show the sequence of talking. You may wish to note the function and content of the communication. You can put a question mark (?) on the line if the person is asking a question, and the letter A on the line if a person is answering a question. You may want to analyze the function

and content more specifically. If you do, then it is generally best to tape record the meeting, transcribe it, and then code each of the interactions. You may review the transcript, then decide what appear to be relevant data, based upon your interests. Or you can apply some predetermined coding systems. **Figure 5** displays communication skills that contribute to effective team functioning and **Figure 6** shows communication functions that inhibit effective communication. **Figures 7** and **8** can be used to record the results of an analysis. If you are familiar with the communication functions, you can code statements as you hear them.

Figure 5

1. **Listening skills**
   - Paraphrasing — responding to the basic messages
     "You are feeling positive about this intervention, but you are confused as to the best way to implement it."
   - Clarifying — restating a point or requesting restatement to ensure understanding
     "I'm confused about this. Let me try to state what I think you have said."
   - Perception checking — determining the accuracy of feeling or emotion detected.
     "I was wondering if the plan you chose is really the one you want. It seems to me that you have expressed some doubt: did I hear correctly?"
2. **Leading skills**
   - Indirect leading — getting a conversation started
     "Let's start by your describing how things are going with the first strategy."
   - Direct leading — encouraging and elaborating discussion
     "What do you mean when you say there is no improvement? Give me a recent example of an incident in class."
   - Questioning — inquiring about specific procedures in an open-ended way
     "Please explain the behavior management system you are currently using," not "Do you have any type of management system?"
3. **Reflecting skills**
   - Reflecting feelings — responding to the emotions expressed
     "It sounds like you are feeling very frustrated with this situation."
   - Reflecting content — repeating ideas in new words for emphasis
     "His behavior is making you wonder about your effectiveness as a teacher."
4. **Summarizing skills**
   - Summarizing — pulling themes together
     "Let's take a look at what we have decided thus far. We have agreed to try peer tutoring and a different reinforcement system."

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Figure 5 continued

5. Informing skills

Advising — giving suggestions and opinions based on experience

"Based on my years of experience, I can tell you that idea will not work."

Informing — giving information based on expertise, research, training.

"I attended a workshop of the... Perhaps that strategy would help make the groups in your room more effective."

From Lawrence M. Brammer, The Helping Relationship: Process and Skills. Copyright © 1988 by Allyn and Bacon. Adapted by permission.

You may be asked to assist a team that is experiencing communicative difficulties. In this instance you will want to observe behaviors that block communication. **Figure 6** describes a number of communication functions that can block effective team communication.

Figure 6

1. Ordering, commanding:
- Can produce fear or active resistance
- Invites testing
- Promotes rebellious behavior, retaliation
- "You must...."; "You have to...."; "You will...."

2. Warning, threatening
- Can produce fear, submissiveness
- Invites "testing" of threatened consequences
- "If you don't, the..." "You'd better, or...."

3. Moralizing, preaching
- Creates "obligation" or guilt feelings
- Can cause others to "dig in" and defend their positions even more ("Who says?")
- Communicates lack of trust in other's sense of responsibility
- "You should...."; "You ought...."; "It is your responsibility...."

4. Advising, giving solutions
- Can imply other is not able to solve own problems
- Prevents other from thinking through a problem, considering alternative solutions and trying them out
- Can cause dependency, or resistance.
- "What I would do is...."; "Why don't you...."; "Let me suggest...."

Figure 6 continued

5. Persuading with logic, arguing
- Provokes defensive position and counter arguments
- Often causes other to "turn off," to quit listening
- Can cause other to feel inferior, inadequate.
- "Here is why you are wrong...."; "The facts are..."; "Yes, but..."

6. Judging, criticizing, blaming
- Implies incompetency, stupidity, poor judgment
- Cuts off communication over fear of negative judgment or "bawling out."
- Accepts judgments as true ("I'm not good"); or retaliates ("You're not so great yourself!"

7. Name-Calling, ridiculing
- Can cause other to feel unworthy, unloved
- Can have devastating effect of self-image of other
- Often provokes verbal retaliation.

8. Analyzing, diagnosing
- Can be threatening and frustrating
- Other can feel either trapped, exposed or not believed
- Stops other from communication for fear of distortion or exposure
- "What's wrong with you is...."; "You're just tired..."; "You don't really mean that."

9. Reassuring, sympathizing
- Causes other to feel misunderstood.
- Evokes strong feelings of hostility ("That's easy for you to say!")
- Other often picks up messages such as "It's not all right for you to feel bad."

10. Praising, agreeing
- Implies high expectations as well as surveillance of other's "toeing the mark."
- Can be seen as patronizing or as a manipulative effort to encourage desired behavior.

11. Probing and questioning
- Since answering questions often results in getting subsequent criticisms or solutions, others often learn to reply with nonanswers, avoidance, half-truths, or lies.
- Since questions often are unclear as to what the questioner is driving at, the other may become anxious and fearful.
- Other can lose sight of his or her problem while answering questions spawned by concerns.
- "Why..."; ""Who..."; What did you..."; "How...".

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Figure 6 continued

12. Diverting, sarcasm, withdrawal

- Implies that life's difficulties are to be avoided rather than dealt with.
- Can imply other's problems are unimportant, petty, or invalid
- Stops openness when a person is experiencing a difficulty.
- "Let's talk about pleasant things..."; "why don't you try running the world!" Remaining silent; turning away.

Source: Gordon, T. (1974). Teacher effectiveness training. New York: Paul H. Wyden. Adapted by Morsink, C.V., Thomas, C.C., & Correa, V.I. (1991). Interactive teaming: Consultation and Collaboration in special programs. New York: Merrill. p. 148.

Communication patterns on teams may also be affected by gender-related communication styles and prejudicial attitudes towards individuals from different professions or of different ethnic/racial backgrounds. See **Appendices B** and **C** for further information on these issues.

Figure 7

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS

Effective Communicative Functions	Team Member 1	Team Member 2	Team Member 3	Team Member 4				
Paraphrasing								
Clarifying								
Perception checking								
Indirect leading								
Direct leading								
Questioning								
Reflecting feelings								
Reflecting content								
Summarizing								
Advising								
Informing								

Figure 8

COMMUNICATION BLOCKS

Communication Block	Team Member 1	Team Member 2	Team Member 3	Team Member 4				
Ordering, commanding								
Warning, threatening								
Moralizing, preaching								
Advising, giving solutions								
Persuading with logic, arguing								
Judging, criticizing, blaming								
Name-calling, ridiculing								
Analyzing, diagnosing								
Reassuring, sympathizing								
Praising, agreeing								
Probing, questioning								
Diverting, sarcasm, withdrawal								

Interviews

Information gained from observation of team environment and communication patterns should be supplemented with interviews from a variety of sources exploring information about quality of services, team process, and team values and beliefs.

Interviews of Team Members.

Interviews of team members can be conducted in several ways. One can conduct typical ethnographic interviews by asking the team members to describe a typical work day. As you listen to the persons talk you note recurring themes, issues, events, people, et cetera that are of particular importance. By using ethnographic interviewing techniques, you can determine how team members view their work situation — what they do, how they do it, why they think they do it, how they feel about what they do and their work environment. In traditional interviews, interviewers predetermine the questions that are to be asked; and in some cases they predetermine the range of responses that can be given. In ethnographic interviewing, both questions and answers must be discovered from the

people being interviewed. Different information is collected from different team members because the values, beliefs, strengths, and needs of each team member may be different. (See Appendix D for information on conducting ethnographic interviews).

Although ethnographic interviews can provide excellent insights, they require considerable time. A more manageable interview approach is to use an interview guide. This requires generating topics you are interested in exploring and asking open-ended questions. Pursue the persons' responses as you might in a full ethnographic interview. The following are examples of questions that might be asked of team members to explore the culture of an early intervention team:

1. Describe your job. What things do you like about your job? What things do you find frustrating?
2. Describe services your program provides to families.
3. What else would you like the program to provide?
4. What changes in the program would you like to see?
5. What skills do you bring to the team?
6. What skills do other members bring?
7. Describe how you feel about contributing information to the team?
8. Can you describe instances that have made you feel good about the team?
9. Can you describe instances that have made you feel frustrated with the team?
10. What suggestions do you have to make the team function better than it is now?

Interviews of Others Who Interact With the Team.

It is useful to gain multiple perspectives on the team culture from a variety of interview sources. This can be done by interviewing persons outside the team regarding their interactions with and perceptions of the team. Interviews can be conducted with clients and families served by the team and with persons from other agencies who interact with the team. Examples of questions to ask parents and/or agency personnel who interact with the team include:

1. Describe the services you have received from the team.
2. Talk about how you experience your interactions with team members.
3. What changes would you like to see in the ways the team's services are provided?
4. What changes would you like to see in your interactions with team members?

Evaluation Questionnaires /Surveys

A variety of questionnaires that assess individual team members' styles and roles and the whole team's perspectives on values, services, and processes can also provide insight into team culture. A listing of some available questionnaires and how they can be obtained in presented in Appendix A.

Questionnaires for Individual Team Members

Each individual on a team brings his or her own style of participating. Though each individual's style originates from a variety of sources, three major sources of a person's style are gender, preferred ways of learning, and one's discipline training or role. Developing awareness of each person's individual characteristics can be helpful in developing a smooth team operation and in making optimal use of each team member's skills. Some of the things that we can look at in order to understand the individuals on a team are their learning styles, the roles they play on the team, and how they handle conflict. A variety of self-administered questionnaires are available to assess these behaviors.

Learning Styles

Each of us brings a preferred way of learning. Some people must be active to learn. Others like to sit back and think things over. Some people want to deal with the real, the concrete, while others prefer the theoretical perspective. Each of these perspectives is important for the overall functioning of a team. *The Learning Style Inventory* (Kolb, 1985) provides one means of determining the learning styles of team members. On the Learning Style Inventory, team members rank 4 endings to each of 12 questions regarding how they feel they learn best. They provide a rank of "4" for the sentence ending that describes how they learn best and a "1" for the sentence ending that seems the least like they learn. The following are types of questions on the Learning Style Inventory:

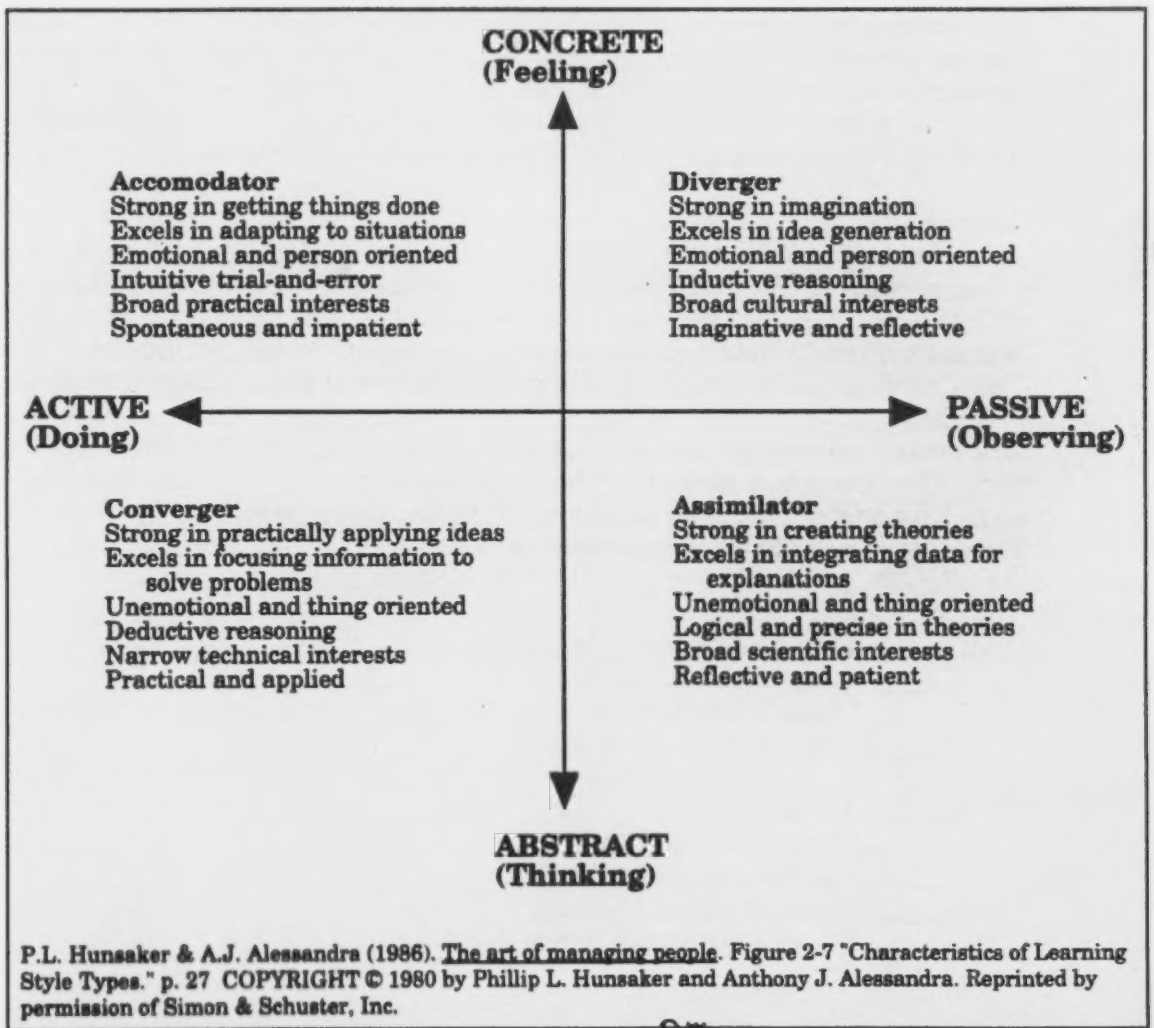
1. When I learn:
   - _____ I like to deal with my feelings
   - _____ I like to watch and listen
   - _____ I like to think about ideas
   - _____ I like to be doing things

2. I learn best when:
   - _____ I trust my hunches
   - _____ I listen and watch carefully
   - _____ I rely on logical thinking
   - _____ I work hard to get things done

3. When I am learning:
   - _____ I have strong feelings and reactions
   - _____ I am quiet and reserved
   - _____ I tend to reason things out
   - _____ I am responsible about things

The scores are then plotted on a four-quadrant grid that represents two dimensions, a doing - reflecting dimension and a concrete/feeling - abstract/thinking dimension. See **Figure 9.**

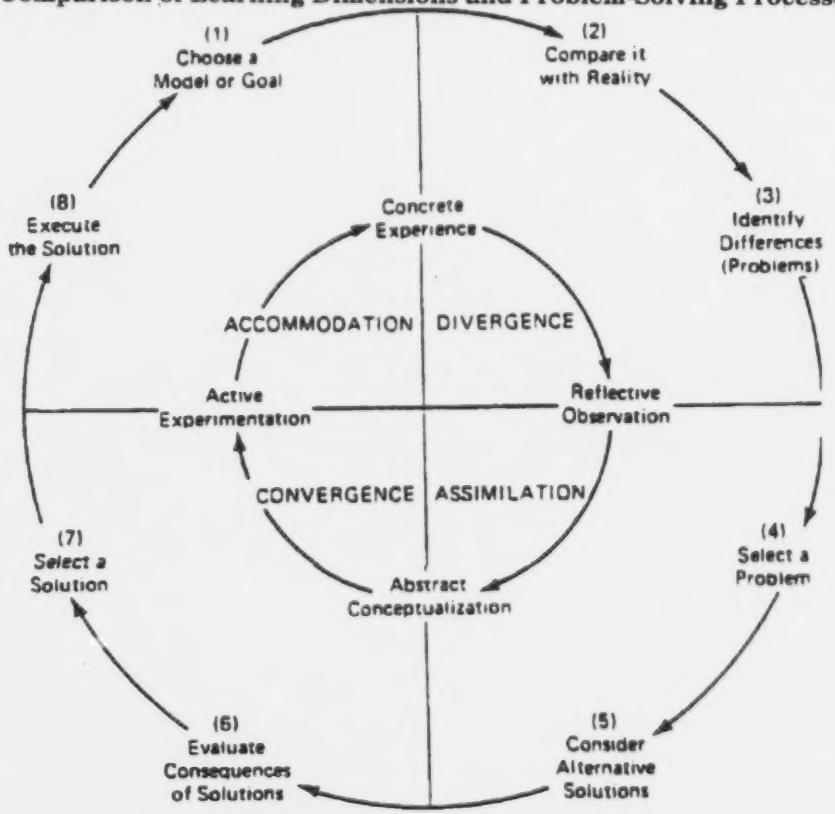
Figure 9
CHARACTERISTICS OF LEARNING -STYLE TYPES



P.L. Hunsaker & A.J. Alessandra (1986). The art of managing people. Figure 2-7 "Characteristics of Learning Style Types." p. 27 COPYRIGHT © 1980 by Phillip L. Hunsaker and Anthony J. Alessandra. Reprinted by permission of Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Each quadrant defines a primary learning style. ***Accommodators*** are persons who learn by hands-on experience and who attend to "gut" feelings more than logical analysis. ***Divergers*** are also sensitive to feelings, but are watchers rather than doers. ***Convergers*** like hands-on experiences, but would rather deal with technical tasks requiring logical thought than with social or interpersonal issues that require attention to feelings. ***Assimilators*** are primarily watchers rather than doers, and they are less focused on people and more focused on abstract ideas. All types of members are needed on teams in order to evaluate adequately and plan an appropriate intervention program for a child. **Figure 10** show the elements necessary in team problem solving and how they relate to the four learning styles.

Figure 10
Comparison of Learning Dimensions and Problem-Solving Processes



P.L. Hunsaker & A.J. Alessandra (1986). The art of managing people. Excerpts. p. 28. "Comparison of Learning Dimensions and Problem-Solving Processes." Copyright © 1980 by Phillip L. Hunsaker and Anthony J. Alessandra. Reprinted by permission of Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Following is an example of how problem solving and learning styles interrelate. When a child is brought in for evaluation, team members must first identify the child's strengths and needs. This requires comparing the child's performance to the performance of other children of his/her age and identifying similarities and differences. Divergers are good at this part of the evaluation because they reflect on the concrete behaviors of the child. They might note that Alicia's speech is unclear, and that it becomes less intelligible when she speaks in longer sentences; that she loses her balance easily and is uncoordinated in motor activities; that she tends to drool when she is concentrating; that she pulls away when anyone touches her; that she prefers playing on playground equipment to playing in the playhouse area of the room.

Once a child's strengths and needs have been identified, the team must make sense of the observations, determine what they should focus on, and consider possible types of services or ways of providing services. Assimilators are good at this aspect of evaluation because they take their observations and relate them to their theoretical knowledge on a topic to come up with a hypothesis regarding the nature of the child's problem and potential solution, e.g., the assimilator may decide that all of her observations of Alicia suggest that she has low tone and praxis problems affecting both her speech and gross and fine motor abilities. The assimilator suggests that the child would benefit from special education services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech therapy. Convergers evaluate the hypotheses generated by the assimilators and select the hypotheses and solution that best fits the specific child and family. The converger decides that Alicia's greatest need at this time is to improve the intelligibility of her speech and recommends that speech therapy with some support from an occupational therapist would best meet her needs at this time. Accommodators then figure out how to carry out the best evaluation or intervention program for the child, determining just what will be done, and when and how it will be done.

Team Player Roles

Each member of a team has roles and responsibilities. Roles are related to the content one has to share and the process one uses in sharing this content. The Team Player Survey (Parker, 1990) is designed to help team members identify their roles or styles as team members. Team members complete 18 sentences by ranking four possible endings to situations. Each ending reflects a different team role. The following are types of questions on the Team Player Survey:

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1. During team meetings, I usually:
   ___ a. provide the team with technical data or information
   ___ b. keep the team focused on our mission or goals.
   ___ c. make sure everyone is involved in the discussion
   ___ d. raise questions about our goals or methods
2. In relating to the team leader, I:
   ___ a. suggest that our work be goal directed
   ___ b. try to help him or her build a positive team climate
   ___ c. am willing to disagree with him or her when necessary
   ___ d. offer advice based upon my area of expertise

3. Under stress, I sometimes:
   ___ a. overuse humor and other tension-reducing devices
   ___ b. am too direct in communicating with other team members
   ___ c. lose patience with the need to get everyone involved in discussions
   ___ d. complain to outsiders about problems facing the team.

4. When conflicts arise on the team, I usually:
   ___ a. press for an honest discussion of the differences
   ___ b. provide reasons why one side or the other is correct
   ___ c. see the differences as a basis for possible change in team direction.
   ___ d. try to break the tension with a supportive or humorous remark.

Answers are scored under four categories. ***Contributors*** are task-oriented persons who enjoy providing the team with technical information. They are viewed as responsible, authoritative, reliable, proficient, and organized. ***Collaborators*** are goal directed persons who see the big picture and attend to the vision, not simply a specific goal. They are flexible and open to new ideas, willing to work outside their defined roles, accommodating, and imaginative. ***Communicators*** are process-oriented persons who are supportive, considerate, and tactful. They are effective listeners and facilitators of conflict resolution and consensus building. ***Challengers*** question the goals and methods of a team and are willing to disagree. They encourage the team to take well-conceived risks and are honest, outspoken, principled, ethical, and adventurous. As with the various learning styles, a team needs persons to fill all the roles.

<u>Conflict Management</u>

All teams will encounter conflict. Conflict is any situation in which one person (or group) perceives that another person or group is interfering with his or her goal attainment (Friend & Cook, 1992). Traditionally, early intervention personnel have disliked and avoided conflict. When professionals worked in isolation it was easier to avoid conflict. Now that staff are required to work together,

they are more likely to experience conflict. When professionals from several disciplines with different frames of reference are making decisions about children's needs, they are likely to differ occasionally about desired outcomes. As we push toward inclusion of all children, more and more needs are being expressed. As more needs are expressed, conflict is likely to emerge because meeting some individuals' needs will interfere with those of others. The increased involvement in decision making by team members also increases the opportunities for conflict. Although team members tend to want to avoid conflict, conflict can have beneficial results. e.g., (Friend & Cook, 1992):

1. Decisions made after addressing a conflict are often high in quality because of the intense effort invested in discussing perspectives and generating acceptable alternatives.

2. The professionals who implement decisions emerging from conflict are likely to have a sense of ownership of the decisions and to be committed to carrying them out.

3. Conflict typically causes professionals to sharpen their thinking about their points of view so that they can clearly communicate them to colleagues. The result is a more carefully reasoned discussion that may include a wider range of ideas and options.

4. Professionals who successfully manage conflict often develop more open, trusting relationships with one another. This facilitates their subsequent interactions.

5. The practice in effectively communicating during the stress of a conflict can make it easier to address other conflict situations.

Conflict can occur between individuals with different goals, between individuals with the same goals, or within individuals. Organizational variables and individual personal characteristics influence conflicts. Conflict is more frequent in organizations without leadership when team members compete for resources. Poor communication within a team also contributes to conflict. Another dysfunctional communication pattern that affects the likelihood of conflict occurs when information is conveyed differently by the individuals who communicate with the team.

Conflict Managing Styles

People have preferred styles for managing conflict. The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (Thomas and Kilmann, 1974) can be used to assess a person's conflict management style. This instrument consists of 30 pairs of statements. For each pair, you circle the statement that is most characteristic of your behavior. The scoring sheet analyzes each of these responses into one of 5 styles: competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, accommodating. The following are examples of statements on the instrument:

1. a. There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.
   b. Rather than negotiate the things on which we disagree, I try to stress those things upon which we agree.

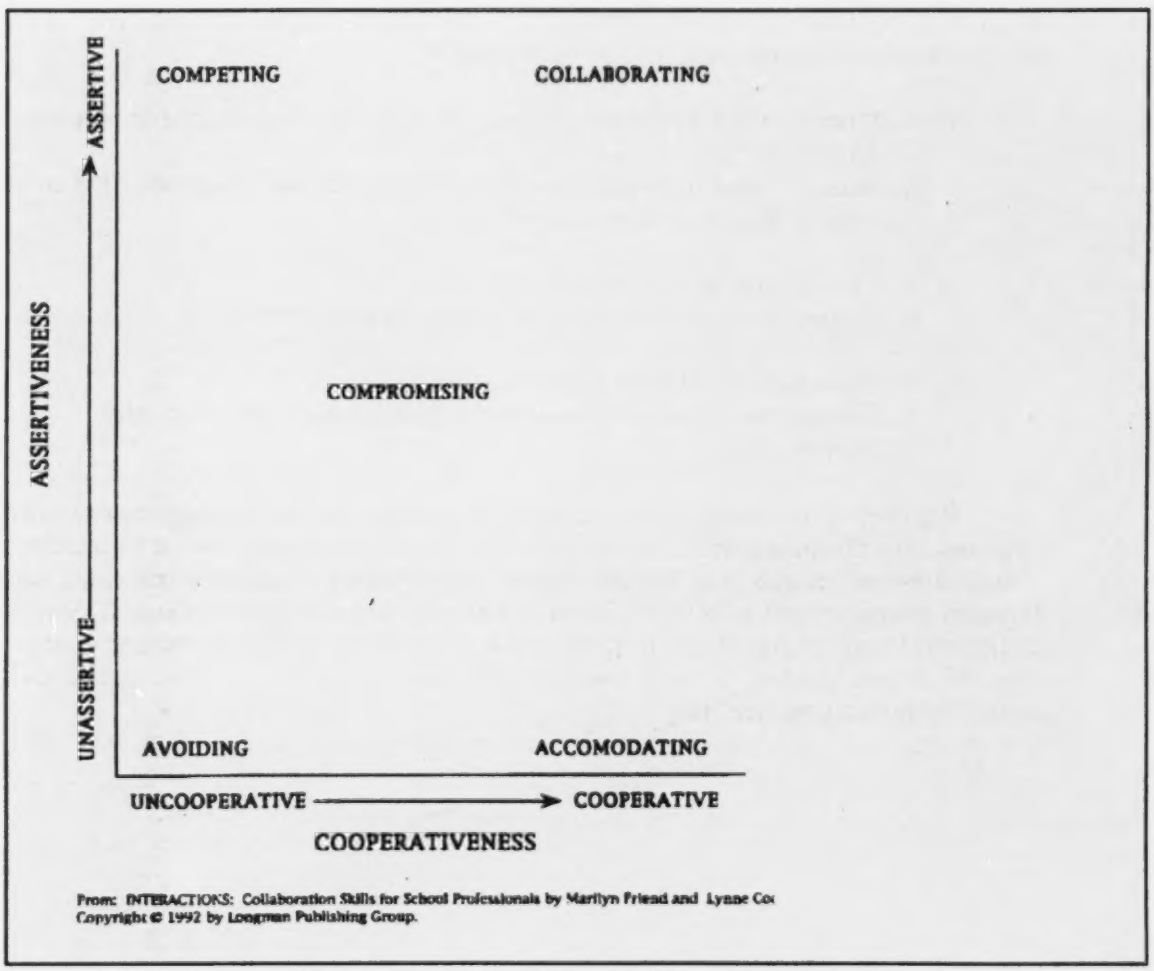
2. a. I try to find a compromise solution.
   b. I attempt to deal with all of his/her and my concerns.

3. a. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
   b. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.

Figure 11 on page 30 presents the common conflict management styles as described by Thomas and Kilmann (1974). These styles vary along two dimensions: cooperativeness and assertiveness. Avoidance styles have the least amount of these characteristics; collaboration has the greatest amount of each. Any of the styles can be appropriate or inappropriate depending on the situation; that is why it is important to analyze each conflict situation to determine the most useful styles for managing conflict.

Figure 11

CONFLICT STYLE



From: INTERACTIONS: Collaboration Skills for School Professionals by Marilyn Friend and Lynne Co
Copyright © 1992 by Longman Publishing Group.

People who use the ***competitive*** style tend to try to overpower others and win at all cost. This style might be appropriate when ethical issues are involved, and you are certain that you are right, or when a decision must be made, and you have more responsibility for the decision than others. If you use a competitive

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style too much, however, other team members will cease interacting with you in meaningful ways.

People who use an ***avoidance*** conflict management style try to ignore discrepancy between their own goals and the goals of others. Such persons simply avoid addressing or participating in the issues. This approach can be appropriate when emotions are running high, and one needs time to regain composure, or if there is not adequate time to discuss the conflict. Avoidance, however, undermines collaboration and can make the conflict worse.

Persons who use an ***accommodating*** style tend to set aside their own needs to ensure the others' needs are met. Their response to conflict is to give in. This style works when conflicts are relatively unimportant or when dealing with the conflict won't change the situation. Accommodating allows the conflict to come to a close quickly so you can address more important issues. The disadvantage of this style is that you can feel that your ideas are devalued and that someone is taking advantage of you.

Persons who use a ***compromising*** style in conflict management give up some of their ideas while demanding that others do the same. The result is that the outcome may not exactly meet the needs of anyone, but is acceptable to all. This style is particularly appropriate when time is limited, when an issue is not particularly problematic, or when two persons who tend to be competitive are locked into a conflict situation. The problem with compromising is that all parties might later be dissatisfied.

The ***collaborative*** style uses high degrees of both assertiveness and cooperativeness to create a situation in which the goals of all parties involved can be accomplished. Collaborating involves developing a completely new alternative to a conflict situation. Collaboration, however, is time consuming, requires certain defining elements to be in place, and can only be done when professionals come to trust one another.

<u>Questionnaires on Team Functioning</u>

In addition to how individual team members operate, we must also consider how the team as a whole functions.

<u>Organizational Style</u>

The *Diagnosing Organizational Culture* (Harrison, & Stokes, 1992) questionnaire provides information on the personality style or overall climate of the team. It yields insight into the way the team makes decisions, the way it motivates its people to work, the typical management style, and the set of underlying

Discovering Team Culture

values and beliefs about work and human nature. Team members rank 4 responses to each of 15 questions twice — once for the present dominant view and once for their preferred view. Each response represents a type of team culture: **power-oriented, role-oriented, achievement-oriented, and support oriented.** The following are sample questions:

Existing Culture | Preferred Culture

1. Members of the organization are expected to give first priority to

_____ _____ a. meeting the needs and demands of their supervisors and other high-level people in the organization.

_____ _____ b. carrying out the duties of their own jobs; staying within the policies and procedures related to their jobs.

_____ _____ c. meeting the challenges of the task, finding a better way to do things.

_____ _____ d. cooperating with people with whom they work to solve work and personal problems.

2. The organization treats individuals

_____ _____ a. as "hands" whose time and energy are at the disposal of persons at higher levels in the hierarchy.

_____ _____ b. as "employees" whose time and energy are purchased through a contract, with rights and obligations on both sides.

_____ _____ c. as "associates" or peers who are mutually committed to the achievement of a common purpose.

_____ _____ d. as "family" or "friends" who like being together and who care about and support one another.

Figure 12 on the page 34 summarizes the characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses of each type of organizational culture. Every team has some combination of these four organizational cultures. The four cultures are only partially compatible with one another, and the benefits of one can only be achieved at the expense of some of the benefits of the others.

The Family Orientation of Community and Agency Services (FOCAS) (Bailey) is a 10 item questionnaire used to determine perceptions of both families and staff about how families are included in the early intervention community program. The FOCAS consists of 12 items that can be used to assess the degree to which a team values and employs a family-centered philosophy in assessment and treatment. Each item is on a 1-9 point scale, with a "1" representing that the philosophy or behavior is not at all present and a "9" indicating that the philosophy or behavior is consistently practiced. Family members and staff rate where they are now as well as where they would like to be.

Evaluations of Team Meetings

Several questionnaires are available that provide information on team members' perceptions of how they function within team meetings.

Dyer's Team Development Scale (Dyer, 1987) is a 10-item scale that evaluates the overall global effectiveness of a team. Items ask about team members' feelings about being part of the team, effectiveness of the team in communicating and achieving goals, handling of conflict, and interaction with the team leader. Each item is rated on a 1-5 point scale.

The items on the Team Effectiveness Rating Scale (Neugebauer, 1983; adapted by the Training and Technical Assistance Unit, New Mexico University Affiliated Program, 1991) are similar to the items on the Dyer Scale. This scale, however, is completed by each team member after a specific team meeting.

Figure 12

Type of Culture	Positive Characteristics	Negative Characteristics	Strengths	Weaknesses
Power-oriented	Strong, charismatic leader Leaders take care of their own; reward and protect loyal followers Leader is wise and benevolent; asks in interests of members Leader demanding but fair	People give boss' wishes priority over important work People afraid to give boss bad news Do not question leaders even when they are wrong People with power break the rules People rise because they are loyal, not because they are competent	Unifies individuals behind vision of leader Can make rapid internal changes Can provide direction and reduce conflict in times of emergency	Change limited by vision and flexibility of leader Hands-on management in large organizations is inefficient Energy diverted from work to politics Leaders may disrupt schedules and plans Leaders overloaded Short-range thinking
Role-oriented	People judged against written descriptions People rewarded for playing by the rules Inefficiency, uncertainty, confusion reduced by clear procedures Responsibility for jobs clearly defined Work methods reduce need for individual decision making	People follow rules even when interfere with getting work done Sin to deviate from accepted procedures Little room to contribute unique abilities Difficult to get approval for changes People treated as interchangeable	Efficient operations reduce time for learning jobs Lines of authority and responsibility reduce conflict, confusion, and indecision Clear rules protect persons from abusive use of power Routine and predictability provide security and reduce stress	Change is difficult and slow Checking/reporting requirements take time away from productive work Everyone takes care of own business; no one takes care of whole People do what rules say rather than what is required Narrow jobs under-use talent and creativity
Achievement-oriented	People share sense of urgency in attaining goals People manage themselves People work long hours without complaint High morale Sense of being part of an elite group	End may justify the means People become intolerant of personal needs Group only cooperates internally; seen as competitive Dissent and criticism stifled; group has difficulty correcting its own errors	Unity of effort toward mutual goals Reduced needs to control individuals High motivation Maximum use of members' talents High esteem for members Rapid learning and problem solving Rapid adaptation to change	Tendency to burn out members Norm of individuality make coordination and control difficult Inefficient
Support-oriented	People go out of their way to cooperate Value harmony; resolve conflicts Available to others; care and listen Appreciate one another; acknowledge one anther's contributions	Focus on relationships to neglect of work May avoid difficult personnel decisions Surface harmony but covert conflict People of unequal contributions rewarded equally, leading to frustration of ambitious	Good internal communication High level of commitment to decisions Nurturing to members Effective group work High trust between team members	Not strongly task-oriented Slow to decide Does not motivate individual achievement Tendency to put needs of people over needs of team May not deal well with conflict

* Adapted from Diagnosing Organizational Culture, by Harrison & Stokes, 1992.

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ALTERING TEAM CULTURE

Understanding a team culture provides the foundation required to make the changes to transform a team into a highly productive, client-centered organization. Team leaders and team members must know where they are and where they want to be.

General Principles of Change

There are several strategies for changing a team culture.

1. Know your present culture. Consider different perspectives of outsiders and insiders. One must look at the team through different eyes. It can be difficult for insiders to provide this "new look." Frequently, the newest members of the team are in the best position to see things that older team members may not be aware of because they are unconsciously entrenched in their deeply held assumptions that new members do not have. New members' perceptions raise issues that the older team members may not see. Sometimes hiring an outside observer/interviewer can be helpful to get new information about the team.

2. Recognize the need for change. Leadership recognizing the need for change is key. Without leaders dedicated to change, it will not happen.

3. Create a vision and mission for the desired culture.

4. Choose new team members who will fit the desired culture. When openings arise on the team, members should seek persons who share their mission and vision.

5. Provide training programs to socialize the team to the desired culture.

6. Redesign managerial systems to support the new culture.

7. Facilitate unified commitment of team members.

Areas of Culture to Change

A team's culture may require changes in one or more of the following areas: program philosophy, individual team member styles, and team members' communicative interactions.

Discovering Team Culture

Program Philosophy

Often the most obvious place to begin change is with the program philosophy. A program should review it vision and mission statements. If the program does not have a vision and mission statement, it should develop them. Use of the *Nominal Group Technique* is a way of ensuring that all team members participate in the development of the program philosophy. The steps of the *Nominal Group Technique* (Kaiser & Woodman, 1985) are listed in **Appendix E.**

Individual Style

An effective team requires persons with all four types of learning styles (**diverger, assimilator, converger**, and **accommodator**) and all four types of team player roles (**challenger, contributor, collaborator**, and **communicator**) if they are to engage in productive problem solving. Although general learning and interactional styles are probably laid down early in development, team members can improve their learning and problem solving by:

1. Developing learning and work relationships with people whose learning strengths and weaknesses are opposite their own;

2. Improving the fit between their learning and interactional style strengths and the kinds of learning and problem-solving experiences they face;

3. Practicing and developing learning and interactional skills in their areas of weakness.

If one or two of the learning or interactional style types are not represented on a team, team members will need to monitor their problem-solving process carefully, and may assign a team member to try to fulfill the learning style and player roles that are missing.

Team Interactions

Team members will need to determine their present mode of communicative interactions. Efforts should be made to assure that all team members are able to participate in team meetings and express their feelings and opinions. Conflict need not be viewed as a negative; it can stimulate the search for new solutions or facts, thus resulting in improvement of group cohesion and performance (Filley, 1975). Effective communication can be facilitated by asking people for their feelings on issues, showing that challenges or resistance are honored by making eye contact, and restating points that are made. Asking "how" or "what" rather than "why" questions can reduce defensiveness.

Discovering Team Culture

Some team members, because they have a higher position or in-depth technical knowledge, may be overbearing in a team. They may discourage discussions that encroach on their expertise and discount suggestions given by other team members. Other team members, with or without authority or expertise, may dominate the talking. Their talking can inhibit some team members' participation and make it difficult for the team to develop a sense of cohesion. Most groups have one or two persons who rarely speak. Problems develop in teams when there are not built-in methods for encouraging introverts to participate and extroverts to listen. Team leaders can employ strategies to deal with overbearing, dominating, or reluctant participants (Scholtes, 1988).

Ways to handle overbearing participants include:

- Getting the authority to agree before a meeting that is important for all members to participate and to understand the process and operation;
- Enforcing the need to provide data, not just opinions.

Ways to handle dominating participants include:

- Practicing gatekeeping: "We've heard from Marcia on this. What do others have to say?"
- Getting the team to agree on the need to focus the discussion and to have balanced participation.

Ways to handle reluctant participants include:

- Acting as a gatekeeper: "Does anyone else have more ideas about this?" (said while looking at the reluctant participant) and then asking the person directly;
- Dividing activities/projects among team members so that everyone will have something to report on.

The ultimate goal of modifying program philosophy, styles of individual team members, and team interactions is to develop a highly effective team. Goals are most easily accomplished when they can be clearly described.

Discovering Team Culture

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEAMS

Learning about team culture can help you build an effective team. What determines if a team is effective? What are the characteristics, features, or attributes of an effective team culture? Larson and La Fasto (1989) conducted an ethnographic study of medical, educational, business, and government teams that were either noteworthy for their achievements or for the insights they provided into the nature of teamwork. Team members were asked to describe their experiences on an unusually effectively functioning team and an unusually poorly functioning team including the factors that accounted for high or low effectiveness. The culture of effective teams includes:

- a clear, elevating goal
- a results-driven structure
- competent team members
- unified commitment
- a collaborative climate
- standards of excellence
- external support and recognition
- principled leadership

Let's consider each of these elements.

Effective teams have an ***elevating goal or mission*** that is clearly phrased in concrete language which makes it possible to determine if the goals are being met. Team members understand the goal to be achieved and believe that the goal is worthwhile or important. The goal also provides an opportunity for team members to excel by stretching their abilities. On the other hand, teams that are ineffective have the following problems related to their goals:

- the goal is vague
- the team has no say in the development of goal
- the team has lost the significance of the goal
- the team's efforts have become diluted by too many competing goals or individual goals have taken priority over group goals.

An assessment team must ask itself what its goals are; and, it must be able to achieve common goals. Goals such as evaluating 600 students a year or qualifying students for special services are not likely to be clear and elevating enough to assure an effective team. What are the team's goals? Are they dictated by a funding source or administrator, or have team members been involved in developing the goals?

Does your team have a clear elevating goal?

Effective teams also have a ***structure*** that facilitates the team achieving its goals. The structure of effective teams provides:

- clear roles and accountabilities of team members
- an effective communication system
- methods for monitoring performance
- an emphasis on fact-based judgments

Team members should know their responsibilities — what they are to do, how they are to do it, and when they are to have tasks or products completed. Without clear roles and responsibilities, all team efforts are likely to be haphazard. Teams must have easily accessible information from credible sources. When structure is applied to assessment/intervention teams, it implies that assessment and intervention plans can't be done in isolation. The team must have adequate information regarding the clients' medical, family, and educational backgrounds. This must be combined with adequate information on the child's current functioning. The team members must then be able to share this information with one another, and they must have adequate amounts of time to do so. The team also needs some way of checking on the validity of their diagnoses and the usefulness and effectiveness of their interventions.

What is the structure of your team?

Successful teams have ***competent members*** who have a ***unified commitment*** to the team's goals. Members also have the necessary technical skills and knowledge to achieve the desired objectives and the personal characteristics to work effectively with others. Assessment and evaluation teams cannot be composed of only generalists. They must also have team members who have specific technical knowledge and skills. Technical expertise, however, is not sufficient. Team members must be willing to collaborate and have the interpersonal skills necessary to share their knowledge in cooperative ways. They must be able to present their information in clear, understandable language to other team members, and they must be able to negotiate and cope with conflict and differences of opinion.

Think about the competence of your team members. How does the team seek to improve the competence of its members? How do individuals show commitment to the team?

Effective teamwork occurs within a ***supportive or collaborative climate***

that facilitates coordination of effort. In a collaborative climate, team members are enthusiastic about their activities and want the team to be effective. This climate is often described as a sense of trust. Trust involves:

1. Honesty and integrity among the team members. There are no lies, exaggerations or talking behind each other's backs;

2. Openness. Team members are willing to share their knowledge and skills and are open to learning from each other;.

3. Consistency. Team members know what to expect from one another, and they can count on each other;

4. Respect. Team members treat each other with dignity and fairness.

Trust facilitates clear communication, promotes collaboration, and allows the team to remain goal directed. When trust is not present, team members exert energy unproductively on activities not related to their mission. They monitor their communication and may distort it to fit the situation and individuals with whom they are talking.

A collaborative climate is essential if team members are to "release" their knowledge and share it with others. **Role release** involves three levels of sharing between two or more team members: general information, informational skills, and performance competencies (Lyon & Lyon, 1980). The first level involves sharing knowledge about basic principles and practices. The informational skill level include teaching others to make judgments, e.g., teaching a nurse how to recognize sensori-integrative problems. The third level, performance competencies, includes training another person to perform specified skills, such as the physical therapist showing the speech-language pathologist how to position a child for therapy.

Team interactions can demonstrate two distinctly different team climates, defensive and supportive/collaborative, which can be identified by the behaviors of the participants (Morsink, C.V., Thomas, & Correa, 1991). **Figure 13** on page 41 contrasts the characteristics of defensive and supportive/collaborative climates.

Figure 13
TEAM CLIMATE CHARACTERISTICS

Defensive Climate	Supportive Climate
Evaluate others' ideas in a judgmental manner	Encourage others to describe events and situations and in turn, describe what others have said
Attempt to control discussion by dominating or lecturing	Ask others to assist in identifying problem and solutions
May enter a meeting with a predetermined strategy designed to manipulate others	Team members may have done preplanning, but reactions are spontaneous, depending on needs of others and the situation
May be neutral; neutrality of suggesting that anything others want is acceptable indicates that person is defensive by virtue of being uninvolved	Express empathy by restating and attempting to clarify feelings and ideas that may impact on problem
Convey superior attitude	Convey attitude of equality

Adapted from Interactive teaming: Consultation & collaboration in special programs by C.V. Morsink, C.C. Thomas & V.I. Correa (1991), Figure 3-11, p. 88. New York: Merrill.

What kind of climate does your team have? Do members collaborate with one another? How?

Effective teams set ***standards of excellence*** for themselves. These standards arise from several sources:

1. Individual team members set standards for themselves. They seek continuing education to develop their expertise. They take pride in their knowledge, their interactions, and the products they produce. It is possible for one team member who places high expectations on himself/

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herself to indirectly influence all other team members to perform at higher levels.

2. The attitudes of the team as a whole can influence one or two team members who do not exhibit the team standards of excellence. Such individuals may begin to upgrade their own skills, or may choose to leave the team, thus leaving room for the team to hire a new member who shares their standards.

3. Success or failure of a team to achieve its goals or outside evaluations may also create pressure for creating standards of excellence. For example, the team that values its diagnostic skills and communication with families is likely to rethink their methods when they receive information from teachers or case coordinators that the evaluation did not reflect the child's performance in the classroom or that families were dissatisfied with their services.

How does your team articulate its standards? Do they reflect a standard of excellence?

External support and recognition are also present in effective teams, but seem to be more a result of effective teams than a cause. Support and recognition are more noted for their absence in poorly functioning teams than for their presence in effective teams. For example, highly effective assessment/intervention teams may be asked to train other teams. As they become recognized for their expertise, they may then be able to request additional funds from outside sources.

What types of external support and recognition does your team provide?

Effective teams have ***effective leaders*** who work with the team to establish a vision and mission. They liberate the team members to express their talent. Effective leaders attempt to understand their team culture so they can bring about change. They are democratic, not authoritarian. In assessment/ intervention teams, effective leaders do not mandate the assessment tools and methodologies to be used. These decisions are based on input from the various competent team members.

How does your team feel about its leadership? What characteristics of effective teams does your team possess? Which characteristics does your team lack? How might you develop the characteristics that are presently lacking?

CONCLUSION

One might ask, "Why study team culture? What makes an understanding of team culture so important?" One response is that our technological world is becoming so complex that no one individual can possess all the knowledge and skills necessary for effective problem-solving; therefore, teamwork has become a necessity in most professions including educational assessment and intervention. Medical and educational personnel are increasingly working on teams rather than independently. Creating a team, however, is only the first step. The team that is created must be effective and productive. A major reason for studying team culture is to determine what makes teams effective or productive and what can be done to increase effectiveness. Effective teams have a synergy—a working together of all their members; they have effective leaders who give guidance and support; team members encourage one another in their endeavors and realize that ultimately all team members are dependent on one another.

These characteristics of effective teams can be witnessed in a flock of geese flying south. The geese possess a clear goal. They exhibit a ***synergy*** — a working together. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an "uplift" for the bird following. By flying in a V formation, the whole flock adds 71% more flying range than if each bird flew alone. Geese also exhibit effective ***leadership***. When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies at the point position. The long flights can be exhausting; the birds must cover many miles and find a place that will provide them with food and water by evening. The geese in formation honk from behind to give ***encouragement*** to those up front to keep up their speed. The members of the flock are ***interdependent***. When a goose gets sick or wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow him down to help protect him. They stay with him until he is either able to fly again or dies. Then they launch out on their own, with another formation or to catch up with their flock (Clinically Speaking, 1992). As you think about your team, remember the metaphor of the geese and allow it to infuse your assessment of your team and its effectiveness.

APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENTS FOR TEAM ASSESSMENT

Self Evaluation

1. Learning-Style Inventory (Kolb, 1985)
   Available from McBer Company, 116 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02116, (617)437-7080 (25 copies for $30).

2. Team Player Survey
   Found in: Parker, Glenn M. (1991). Team players and team work. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Also available from XICOM, Inc., Woods Road, Tuxedo, NY 10987 (800-759-4266; $5.50 per survey).

3. Conflict-Management Style Survey
   Available in: Phillips, S.L. & Elledge, R.L. (1989). The team building source book. University Associates, 8517 Production Avenue, San Diego, CA 92121.

Team Evaluations

1. Team Development Scale
   Found in: Dyer, W.G. (1987). Team building: Issues and alternatives. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing. Contact 1-800-447-2226 for permission to reprint.

2. FOCAS: Family Orientation of Community and Agency Services Questionnaire.
   Available from Don Bailey, Ph.D., Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, Campus Box 8180, UNC-CH, Chapel Hill, NC 27599.

3. Brass Tacks
   McWilliam, P.J. & Winton, P. (1991). Brass Tacks: A Self-Rating of Family-Centered Practices in Early Intervention. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center.

4. The Family Report
   McWilliam, P.J. (1991). The Family Report: Consumer Opinion on the Quality of Services in Early Intervention Programs. Chapel Hill, NC: Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center.

5. Family-Centered Program Rating Scale
Summers, J.A., Turnbull, A.P., Murphy, D.L., Lee, I.M. & Turbiville, V. (1991). Family-Centered Program Rating Scale. Lawrence, KS: Beach Center of Families and Disability, Bureau of Child Research, University of Kansas.

APPENDIX B

CHARACTERISTICS OF GENDER COMMUNICATION

Gender is an important variable in communication. Many early intervention teams include few men or are comprised exclusively of women. Check your knowledge of gender variations in communication by answering the following quizzes.

Which statements are true and which are false?

1. In mixed dyads, men interrupt more often than women
2. Women engage in greater mutual eye-contact with a same sex partner than men.
3. Same-sex pairs of women sit closer together than do same-sex pairs of men.
4. Women speak at a greater volume than men.
5. Women both touch and are touched more than men.
6. Men maintain more eye-contact than women in mixed dyads.
7. Men take up more space than women.
8. Men smile more than women.
9. Women are slightly more accurate in judging emotions from observing facial expressions than men.
10. Men reveal their emotions with their faces more readily than do women.

Answers: 1.F; 2.T; 3.T; 4.F; 5.T; 6F; 7.T; 8.F; 9.T; 10.F.

Source: Anderson, A.R. & Abeyta, C.J. (1988). Face-to-face interactions: Experiencing the dyadic communication process. p. 34. Copyright © 1988, Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt. Reprinted by permission of Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

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Fill in the blanks with either the word "men" or "women" in the following sentences:

1. _____ make finer color distinctions than _____.
2. _____ have greater mechanical, technical vocabularies than _____.
3. _____ are more likely to use words like "lovely," "adorable," and "precious" than _____.
4. _____ use intense words to express themselves more often than _____.
5. _____ are often permitted to curse while _____ have less freedom to do so.
6. _____ use less tag endings ("right?" or "OK?") than _____.
7. _____ use more qualifiers (ex: maybe, perhaps) than _____.
8. _____ have been traditionally taught to be more literal and direct than _____.

Answers: 1. women, men; 2. men, women, 3. women, men; 4. women, men; 5. men, women; 6. men, women; 7. women, men: 8. men, women

Source: Anderson, A.R. & Abeyta, C.J. (1988). Face-to-face interactions: Experiencing the dyadic communication process. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt. p. 49.

Figure 1a on page 49 and 50 compares and contrasts men and women on a variety of communicative dimensions.

How might these gender-related style issues affect team interaction?

Research on mainstream, middle-class white men and women has revealed a number of differences in communication styles. Men and women generally use talk for different purposes. Men talk primarily to report information. They are generally more comfortable doing public speaking and using language to maintain a social hierarchy. In a team meeting they are likely to want to get down to business immediately. They hold center stage by exhibiting their knowledge. They are more likely than women to use abstract argumentation than personal experiences to support their statements. They do not fear being different or disagreeing with others, and they are willing to directly confront team members with whom they disagree in front of the group.

Women are more likely to start meetings with rapport talk. They seek to establish connections and negotiate relationships before "getting down to business." Meetings may begin with a sharing time, talking about what is happening in their personal lives outside of work. Within meetings, women are more likely than men to focus on similarities. They tend to use personal experiences to exemplify issues. They are generally uncomfortable about getting into disagreements within team meetings. They will attempt to avoid disagreements and will agree to things to maintain a symmetry, even if it means claiming lack of achievement. Women are likely to avoid direct confrontation within a team meeting. After the meeting, however, they may seek out others whom they think agree with them and discuss what happened in the meeting and their frustration or anger.

Men and women handle leadership positions differently. Men often take a commanding, controlling approach to team meetings, and they relate to others in a hierarchical, power relationship mode. They are often comfortable using their status in decision-making. Women are more likely to try to make interactions with subordinates positive. They try to promote the positive self-worth of team members and will do things to reinforce their contributions. They generally use an egalitarian approach in decision-making and will attempt to achieve consensus on decisions, rather than dictating a decision if at all possible.

In mixed settings, men control most conversations. They talk more, for longer periods of time, and do virtually all the interrupting. Consequently, women report greater difficulty presenting their ideas in mixed groups. Women often withdraw from group discussions, favoring one-on-one interactions in which they feel less on display. Men often interpret such withdrawal as women having less to

Figure 1a
Gender Communication Styles

Style Component	Anglo Middle-Class Women	Anglo Middle-Class Men
Communicative function	Rapport talk -- women more comfortable doing "private speaking"; used to establish connections and negotiate relationships; emphasis on displaying similarities and matching differences; tendency to use personal experiences/situations in both "private" and "public" talking	Rapport talk -- men more comfortable doing "public speaking"; used to maintain status in a social hierarchy; done by exhibiting knowledge and skill and by holding center stage through verbal performance; avoid using personal experiences -- rely on abstract argumentation
Creating rapport	Agreeing; being the same to reinforce symmetry; keeping the scales even, even if it involved claiming lack of achievement	Don't fear disagreement or being different
Response to problem	Empathetic sharing/identification with speaker; see as contributing to sense of community	Advise giving (distancing tactic); giving/receiving help; women tend to be comfortable with both giving and receiving; men comfortable with giving, but not receiving
Powerless language: (1) hedges or qualifiers (sort of, kind of), (2) super polite forms, (3) tag questions (doesn't it), (4) emphatic words (so, very) or empty adjectives (charming, sweet), (5) hypercorrect grammar, (6) disclaimers (I know I'm not an expert, but....)	Women use all of these forms more than men because social status seems to determine their use; they tend to phrase imperatives as questions (instead of "meet me at my office." "Can you meet me at my office?"); intensifiers (emphatic words focus on emotional message rather than cognitive meaning -- I am sooo hungry!)	Men use more direct language and do not use hyper correct grammar
Indirectness	About personal preferences	About personal feelings/relationships
Asking for information	Comfortable for women -- it builds connections	Difficult for men -- it's humiliating to say, "I don't know."
Speaking up	Less comfortable using talk to gain center stage; tend not to use expertise as power in conversation	Tend to reveal expertise in conversation; tend to use talk to claim attention
Turn taking	In same sex conversations enjoy cooperative overlapping (rapport talk); tend to acknowledge previous speakers contribution; little experience in deflecting attempts to take control of a conversation; tend not to interrupt men	Men interrupt women more often; tend not to value overlaps; don't like their remarks to previous speaker, but concentrate on making their own point; emphasize one speaker at a time; conversation is seen as contest for the floor; enjoy verbal sparring
Minimal responses (uh huh, yeah)	Women use more to support person speaking	Men use delayed minimal responses to discourage interaction
Verbosity	Women's verbosity is measured with norm of silence; their topics are viewed as trivial -- therefore they talk too much	Men tend to talk more and are seen as having a right to talk
Asking questions	Women tend to ask more questions perhaps as a strategy for managing conversation; questions require an answer; asking ensures conversation continues (could also be viewed as a sign of powerlessness)	Men see questions as request for information
Topic shifts	Women tend to build on each others' contributions; topics shift gradually; elaboration and continuity key elements	Abrupt shifts in topics; continuity, elaboration not important
Leadership style	Interactive; women tend to work to make interactions with subordinates positive and promote self-worth; stimulate enthusiasm and try to transform employee's self-interest into larger group interest; transformational style	Tend to have commanding and controlling style; relate to employees in series of transactions either reward or punish; rely on position for power; "transactional style"
Decision making	Rule by consensus; egalitarian ethic	Rule by fiat; status ethic

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Figure 1a (continued)

Style Component	Anglo Middle-Class Women	Anglo Middle-Class Men
Eye contact	Women look at each other when they talk as a way to establishing intimacy and involvement	Men avoid looking at each other when they want to avoid combativeness and to achieve friendly connections and involvement
Self disclosure	Women disclose more weakness (may reinforce subordination)	Men disclose more strengths
Visible expression of emotions	Sadness, fear expressed; smile to promote pleasantness in communication	Anger expressed; smile to represent pleasant inner state
Eye contact	Women look at partner more than men, primarily to express affiliation	Men use more for dominance
Body movement	Women cock their heads from side to side more; closed postures; less range of movement than men	Men hold head upright; widened postures; greater range of movement; more gestures
Touch	Passive touching (role of the cared for – men take women's arms)	Active touching (superior freer to initiate touch of subordinate that vice versa)
Use of space	Women are awarded less space (assumed to occupy less status); where space is limited, yield more readily	Men claim a right to more space; where space is limited, men less apt to yield
Humor	Few women that men tell jokes in large groups; many tell jokes to other women, fewer to men, and very few to groups that include men and women; will refuse to tell jokes they know	Tell more jokes than women; do not refuse the invitation to tell jokes

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contribute. Men use more direct and explicit language than women. Women use more powerless forms of language. Powerless language uses qualifiers (sort or, kind of, think); super polite forms ("thank you so very much," "would you be so kind as to..."); tag questions (doesn't it; isn't it); emphatic words (so, very) or empty adjectives (sweet, charming); disclaimers ("I know I'm not an expert"); and hedges ("I'd rather not" instead of "I won't;" or "Can you meet me at the office?" as opposed to "Meet me at the office.").

Women tend to be less comfortable is using talk to gain center stage and they tend not to use expertise as power in conversations. They are comfortable asking for information, and will, in fact, use requests for information as a way to build connections. They are also comfortable in both giving and receiving assistance. Men more often use talking to gain attention, and usually are not hesitant to reveal their expertise in conversations. They often find it difficult to ask for information, perhaps because it suggests they don't know and to not know is humiliating. Men are comfortable giving assistance, but less comfortable in receiving it.

These differences in communicative styles can result in miscommunication, conflict, or simply discomfort in team meetings. Individuals may feel that they can't connect with other team members which can result in team members not easily sharing information. Teams that are comprised of members of the same gender might feel more comfortable than mixed gender teams. Even in same gender teams, however, gender communication styles may result in communication difficulties. For example, women's tendency to avoid conflict may result in limited evaluation of issues. Men's hesitancy to ask for information may result in undertaking activities without the establishment of a sufficient foundation. Therefore, it is important, when assessing a team's performance, for the evaluator to be aware of the effect gender can have in a team's ability to communicate well.

APPENDIX C

ISSUES OF PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

The culture of teams is complex because the individuals on teams have widely disparate roles, vocabularies, and perspectives as a result of their highly specialized professional training. Eggers (1983) has described difficulties that can arise:

...imagine a sporting event with doctors, nurses, therapists, and other health professionals competing against educators and developmental psychologists. Each team insists that the game be played on their field by their rules — impossible conditions for productive, organized competition....the silliness of the image fades and is replaced by an image of a child being pulled in multiple directions by different types of professionals while, bewildered, frustrated parents pace the sidelines (p.2).

We seldom think about considering prejudicial behavior in teams. Prejudice is often associated with race or ethnicity, but it is not limited to these attributes. Prejudice and discriminatory behavior can arise whenever people perceive one another as different. Prejudice has three components (Aboud, 1988):

1. A negative evaluation;
2. An evaluation elicited by ethnicity/race or association with a particular group, not personal qualities;
3. An organized predisposition to react negatively.

A negative evaluation is the primary component of prejudice. Stereotyping by itself is not prejudicial. A stereotype can be neutral. For example, thinking that all Mexican-Americans eat tortillas, that all African-Americans can dance, that all physical therapists are athletic, or that all speech/language pathologists talk a lot is stereotypical — by itself, however, it is not prejudicial because it does not involve a negative judgment. Thinking that all Native Americans are quiet is stereotypical, but it is not prejudicial unless one makes a negative interpretation of the stereotype, such as "Native Americans are quiet because they're not intelligent." On a team, attitudes become prejudicial when one assumes that one professional group is less competent, knowledgeable or caring than another group. Thinking that speech-language pathologists talk a lot is not prejudicial, unless one concludes that "they're controlling and won't listen to anyone else."

Prejudice also involves an organized predisposition. That is, when one is faced with a person from a particular group, one's reaction is to look for negative behaviors. For example, rather than seeing the assets of the different members on the team and what they contribute, one might tend to focus on the problems that arise because of the differences.

In principle, the majority of adults maintain egalitarian attitudes toward other groups and condemn prejudice and discrimination. They acknowledge that there is discrimination against minority groups, but they tend to minimize the extent of the discrimination and to assume that instances of discrimination occur more frequently somewhere else (compared to their own team or community) (Rothbart, 1976). Mainstream individuals find it difficult to recognize the pervasiveness of racism. Minority individuals are alert to incidences of prejudices. When they attempt to explain their frustration with instances of prejudice and discrimination, however, they are accused of "having their antennae up," "being too sensitive," or "misinterpreting" (Essed, 1991). These attitudes of mainstream persons prevent them from hearing the minority persons' concerns, and consequently, they are prevented from being actively involved in reducing prejudice.

Themes of Prejudice

How do persons recognize instances of prejudice when they encounter it? Prejudicial beliefs are transmitted through social discourse (van Dijk, 1987). To recognize and understand prejudice, then, one must understand the structure of the discourse — its form and content. Prejudicial talk in adults has fairly regular macrostructures or organizational patterns and microstructures or themes. Thematically, prejudicial talk centers on three notions:

- **Difference:** They are different (in culture, norms, training, knowledge, philosophy);
- **Deviance:** They are involved in negative behaviors or unsupported treatments;
- **Threat:** They threaten our socioeconomic and cultural interests.

In fact, all of these themes center on perceived threats. The first represents a threat to norms, rules, habits, and cultural order ("We'll have to change the way we conduct evaluations"). The second can be interpreted as a threat to safety or well being or, in general, a threat to social order ("They are pushy;" "They don't follow prescribed guidelines"). And the last is a perceived threat to socio-economic interests ("Their salaries are higher than everyone else's, and they only have B.A. degrees."). These dimensions of difference, deviance, and threat may be further

organized by the well-known dimension of superiority. The differences or competition involved are not perceived to divide equal groups. Professionals tend to take pride in their own professional groups and comment on how they are different from other professional groups.

What stereotypes do you associate with occupations? How do these perceptions influence your interactions in the team setting?

Profession / Occupation *Perceptions / Associations*

Structure of the Discourse of Prejudice

Team members need to become alert to instances of prejudicial talk. Prejudicial language generally takes the form of an argumentative macrostructure with the following elements (van Dijk, 1987):

1. Position statement (opinion): I do not like X of group Y (e.g., "I do not like the narrow focus of social workers' emphasis on family systems. They think children's behavior can all be explained by family interaction patterns).

2. Inference principle (mostly implicit): If Y has/does X, then Y is bad (e.g., "Family systems theory cannot explain the behavior of most children we evaluate.").

3. General fact: Y always have/do X, (e.g., "Social workers always use family systems theory to explain behavior.").

4. Particular fact: I have experienced that X1 did/have Y1, (e.g., "Remember how Ms. Wilbur, the social worker handled the Tafoya child. She blamed the child's feeding difficulties on attachment problems, when the child really had motor problems that made it difficult for her to coordinate suck-swallow-breathe patterns).

5. Supporting ("objective") evidence for truth of 3 or 4, (e.g., "Social workers don't have the training to prepare them to understand medical and developmental problems.").

Argumentative structure is a common form used for the expression of delicate opinions. People who explicitly state prejudicial opinions about other groups will, implicitly or explicitly, state such opinions with supporting evidence. Such arguments may involve general principles and general facts, as well as particular facts, such as personal experiences. Because it is generally considered inappropri-

ate to express a derogatory opinion about minorities or other professionals on a team, speakers must provide supporting evidence and evaluations in accordance with accepted norms, and they must use a positive self-presentation strategy when stating the opinions. Concrete stories of personal experiences have an important persuasive function because they are in principle true and not just opinion. One is not generally criticized for giving a personal story, although it might carry prejudicial information.

A frequent move in such prejudicial argumentation is to emphasize differences in cultural or educational experiences to explain the perceived conflict. For example, "It's not appropriate in their culture to stand out," or "OTs don't have any training in the use of language for regulating behavior." Such explanations presuppose that the persons in the group indeed have the behaviors or attributes as stated and then ascribe such behavior (and hence conflict) to such cultural or professional educational differences. Thus, the others are blamed and, at the same time, speakers contribute to their own positive self-presentation by showing understanding for such differences. Because arguments of this type are based on real experiences and premises that are generally known to be true, the arguments appear plausible and hence can be persuasive. It is, therefore, difficult for persons to produce counter arguments because they often lack the information to challenge the wrong (prejudiced) presuppositions.

The overall goal of persons using prejudicial arguments is to present others in a negative manner, while at the same time preserving a positive image of themselves. Because professional social norms do not allow negative talk about other groups, speakers must use strategies to reconcile these inconsistencies. Van Dijk (1987) calls these strategies ***semantic moves***. A statement such as "early interventionists aren't as bright as PTs" may be interpreted as an expression of a prejudicial opinion. At the global or macrostructure level of conversation, therefore, the speaker will make sure to provide arguments and stories that are taken as evidence for the opinion that "they can't handle hard academics." In this case, then, the proposition will no longer be a subjective, prejudiced opinion, but a statement of fact.

At the local or microstructure level, speakers make strategic moves that may inhibit negative inferences about the opinions or personality of the speakers. For instance after saying, "Their training is narrow," the speaker may add "but that's true of many professions today," or "They haven't had a good model." By extending the negative characteristic to many professionals, the speaker cannot be accused of prejudicial remarks to a single group. By adding an explanation for the negative characterization to others, the speaker cannot be accused of ethnic prejudice, and by adding an explanation that specifies one of the causes, a possible

excuse is formulated. Several types of semantic moves are available to speakers as a means of mitigating prejudicial statements.

1. Example. Personal examples are provided as evidence for supporting generalized statements, (e.g., "I've worked with four psychologists, and they've all made themselves the team leader." or "I've worked with two Black SLPs and neither of them were as well-trained as white SLPs.").

2. Generalization. Generalization is a complementary move to giving personal examples. After a specific example, the speaker generalizes to an entire group, (e.g., Alicia is always late with her reports. Native Americans generally aren't good at meeting deadlines." or "Monica thinks all hyperactivity is due to sensori-integrative problems. That's just like an OT; they never see the whole picture.").

3. Apparent denial and negation. This is an especially common move in prejudicial discourse. The speaker denies having negative opinions and then gives a negative opinion, (e.g., "I really like working on a culturally diverse team; I just wish that the Black staff members were not so aggressive.").

4. Explanation. Statements about controversial topics usually need explanation. As persons learn about cultural differences in communication and behaviors patterns, they may use this knowledge to mitigate their negative feelings, (e.g., "Stella [who is a New Yorker] is so domineering in team meetings. Easterners talk fast and have a short pause time, so it's difficult for us to get a word in edgewise.").

5. Apparent concession. This move begins with a positive statement, but concludes with a negative opinion. Speakers are attempting to show that they are not prejudiced because they are aware of positive characteristics of the group, (e.g., "I admire Hispanics' attentiveness to their families, but they won't be able to advance in a job if they always put their family first.").

6. Mitigation. This move avoids saying very negative things. Instead of saying, "Her behavior is strange and I can't tolerate her interaction style," the speaker says, "Her behavior is a little unusual," and "Her interactions aren't quite what we would like."

7. Contrast. These statements often focus on "what is done for them versus what is done for us," (e.g., "OTs get paid more than us [SLPs], and they don't have as much training.").

The same underlying prejudicial opinions may be expressed in different ways. The lexical and syntactic variation is referred to as style. Stylistic variation in discourse is usually a function of contextual properties such as (in)formality of the social situation and social dimensions such as power, status, position, or gender of the speech participants. Speakers generally use indirect rather than direct forms when talking about minorities. One is not likely to hear, "I hate them," regardless of how strong the feelings might be. The tendency is to express negative feelings in rather soft language, (e.g, "I'm not comfortable around them."). Because of strong official norms about racism, persons will downplay or understate racial/ethnic feelings.

Speakers may also use second person pronouns and demonstrative pronouns (e.g., those) to convey their social distance from the ethnic/racial group under discussion. Persons tend to avoid naming people they do not like, using instead words like "those people," "you" or "that man." These pronouns are associated with power and group relationships among speakers (Brown & Gilman, 1960). This pronominal use may be so much a part of mainstream discourse that speakers are not fully aware of the message they are conveying to listeners. This was highlighted in the 1992 presidential campaign when Ross Perot, addressing the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, made frequent reference to "you people" and "your people."

When evaluating a team's performance, it is important for the evaluator to be aware of prejudicial attitudes relative to race as well as professional differences.

APPENDIX D

ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEWING

Although each ethnographic interview is unique and the specific questions asked during the interview vary, it must not be assumed that there is no structure or pattern to the interviews. There are systematic procedures for conducting ethnographic interviews (Spradley, 1979). All ethnographic interviews have the goal of helping the interviewer understand the social situations in which the team members exist and how they perceive, feel about, and understand the situations. Every social situation has nine major dimensions. Understanding the team requires understanding of each of these dimensions in the situations in which the team members work. The following chart lists the nine dimensions and gives definitions and examples of each dimension.

SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

Dimensions	Definitions	Examples
Space	the physical place or places	offices, therapy rooms, playground
Actor	the people involved	family members, therapists, early interventionist
Act	single actions that people do	sign, point
Activity	a set of related acts	evaluation, interpretive session, counseling
Event	a set of related activities that people carrry out	IFSP meeting
Object	the physical things that are present	assessment materials, toys, medical equipment, computers
Time	the sequencing that takes place over time	steps in intake
Goal	the things people are trying to accomplish	involving parents in the IFSP process
Feeling	the emotions felt or expressed	confident, uncertain, pleased, devalued

Discovering Team Culture

Ethnographic interviewing involves the use of descriptive and structural questions to describe the nine dimensions of social situations. An ethnographic interview usually begins with descriptive questions. Descriptive questions are used to encourage individuals to talk about these social situations and dimensions in their daily lives. Structural questions are used to determine the relationships that exist within these social situations. By asking descriptive and structural questions, the interviewer learns what team members consider important in their world and how they perceive their world and organize the relationships within and among these social dimensions.

There are five types of descriptive questions:

1. Grand tour questions are intended to encourage an individual to talk about broad experiences.

1.1 Typical grand tour questions: These ask a person to generalize about how things usually are, e.g., "Tell me about a typical day in this program." Some people will refuse to answer a typical grand tour question because they say that nothing is typical; every day is a different experience. In such instances, the interviewer can ask a specific grand tour question.

1.2 Specific grand tour questions: These questions focus on a recent specific time frame (e.g., "Tell me about what you did this morning.").

1.3. Guided grand tour questions: These ask the person to give a grand tour. You may suggest, "When I come, I'd like you to carry on with your usual routines and tell me what's happening."

2. Mini-tour questions: These are the same as grand tour questions, but they ask the person to describe a specific activity or event. If you are primarily interested in how the team functions in transdisciplinary evaluations, staffings, or IFSP meetings, then you will ask the team member to describe one of these typical events. Mini-tour questions are used to gather more information about each situation.

2.1 Typical mini-tour questions: "Would you describe a typical staffing?" As you hear the response, listen for information about the dimensions of the social situation—where the staffing is held [place], who participates [actors], what kinds of things are used during the staffing [objects, e.g., enter information into a notebook computer; OT brings toys for staff members], what activities they engage in [activities, e.g., completing summary form], when and how long the staffing lasts [time], do they engage in sequences of activities [events], how they feel during the staffing [feeling], and what they want to accomplish in the staffing [goal].

2.2 Specific mini-tour questions: "Tell me about your staffing this morning."

2.3 Guided mini-tour questions: "As I watch this evaluation, tell me what you are doing."

3. Example questions: These are more specific than the tour questions. They take some idea or experience and ask for an example. For example, if a team member says, "We make parents feel comfortable," you might ask, "Give me an example of what you do to make parents feel comfortable."

4. Experience questions: These ask about experiences in a particular setting (e.g., "Tell me about some of your experiences with the physical therapist during staffings."). Experience questions tend to elicit atypical incidents. Consequently they are best asked after numerous grand tour and mini-tour questions have provided the interviewer with information about typical behavior.

5. Native language questions. Interviewers want to be certain that they understand how people are using words and that people understand how interviewers and other professionals are using words. Native language questions are useful for these purposes. Native language questions ask people to use the terms and phrases they would most commonly use, and the interviewer seeks to understand what these terms mean to the respondent.

5.1 Direct language questions: These are asked when interviewers think persons are using a word for their benefit, or because they think those are the words interviewers want to hear. For example, "You mentioned that all the children in the nursery receive 'environmental care services.' What are other words you would use to describe what you do in the nursery?"

5.2 Hypothetical interaction questions: These are used to determine a person's understanding of information and to get a sense of how the person would usually talk about an experience, situation, or concept. For example, "Your team had a session on conflict management last week. How would you describe the session to a team member who wasn't there?"

The person's responses to the descriptive questions will enable the interviewer to discover what is important to the interviewee. As one listens to the answers to descriptive questions, one begins to hear words or issues repeated reflecting the nine social dimensions. For example, in response to a specific grand tour question about a program, you hear things such as, "parents help out in the classroom," "parents set their child's goals," "parents serve on the Board," etc.

Roles of parents may represent an important aspect of the team culture. In ethnography these aspects or categories are termed domains. Domains are made up of three elements: cover terms, included terms, and semantic relationships. The words used to refer to domains are cover terms. In the above example, the cover term is "roles of parents in the program." Included terms are "helping in the classroom, setting their child's goals, and serving on the board." The semantic relationship among these items is that they are all "kinds of things parents do."

The following table lists the most common types of semantic relationships that exist in the social dimensions and examples of each relationship that team members on an early intervention team might report.

SEMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Relationship	Form	Example
Strict inclusion	X is a kind of Y	kinds of information the nurse contributes
Spatial	X is a part of Y	parts of a test kit
Cause-effect	X is a course of Y	therapy is a cause of changes in clients
	X is a result of Y	part-time therapists are a result of limited funds
Rationale	X is a reason for doing Y	reasons for avoiding conflict
Location for action	X is a place for doing Y	places for team meetings places for therapy
Function	X is used for Y	tape recorders used to collect language samples
Means-end	X is a way to do Y	ways to teach
Sequence	X is a step (stage) in Y	steps in writing the IFSP
Attribution	X is an attribute of Y	attributes of people who are helpful

The interviewer uses structural questions to explore the domains, the included terms, and the semantic relationships. As you listen or look back over your notes, you notice words that may represent domains and specific issues that may be subsumed under domains. In response to a grand tour question about a typical staffing, the speech/language pathologist mentions, "We feel it's important that we present a unified front to the parents;" the nurse says, "It's important that we are accepting of everyone's ideas;" the early interventionist suggests, "I don't want to raise questions because I don't have the training that the specialists do," the administrator says, "We want all of our staff to be happy here. I try not to talk about controversial matters." These statements may fall under a domain of "handling team conflict." The interviewer may pursue the area of team conflict by asking a variety of structural questions such as, "what are reasons for avoiding

conflict on the team?" "What are ways the team handles conflict when it arises?" "What are causes of team conflict?"

If a team commits to have an evaluation that includes ethnographic interviews, valuable information about the team can be collected and analyzed that might be overlooked in more structured interview formats.

APPENDIX E

NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUES

Step 1 - Silent generation of ideas in writing. Each member is asked to write down key ideas related to the issue under consideration, silently and independently. The benefits of this step are that members can think/reflect freely, interruptions are avoided, undue focusing on a particular idea or content area is minimized, competition, status pressure, and conformity are avoided, the group remains problem-centered, and the group avoids selecting a choice prematurely.

Step 2 - Round-robin recording of ideas. Each member is asked sequentially to provide one idea until all ideas are processed. The group leader records each item on a blackboard or flip chart. Benefits include: equal participation, increase in problem-mindedness, depersonalization—the separation of ideas from personalities, an increase in the ability to deal with a larger number of ideas, tolerance for conflicting ideas, encouragement of hitchhiking (generating new ideas from presented ideas), and the development of a written record.

Step 3 - Serial discussion for clarification. Each idea is discussed in turn. During this process, each item can potentially receive adequate discussion/clarification, logic can be provided behind arguments and disagreements, and differences of opinion can be recorded without undue argument. It is important to stress here that steps 2 and 3 are solely for idea generation and clarification, not evaluation.

Step 4 - Preliminary vote on item importance. Each member independently rank orders, in his or her opinion, the most salient items. Typically, a limit is placed (e.g., each member's top five). Independent listing minimizes status, personality characteristics, and conformity pressures. From the total list, the most salient items emerge, ranked in order, based upon the total frequency of each item.

Step 5 - Discussion of the preliminary vote - (optional). Each member is allowed a brief period to comment upon the selected items. This allows the group to examine inconsistent voting patterns and also allows for discussion of those items that received unusually high or low rankings.

Step 6 - Final vote. The group combines individual judgment into a group decision using a mathematical procedure. This allows for a sense of closure, accomplishment, and documentation. It is important to note that the mathematical resolution may take the form of rank ordering, a system of rating each item, or the

selection of a single best item based upon the frequency of votes for each item. The procedure should fit the group's needs.

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